

OJS Quarters Projects Feature Solar Energy

OFMC's five-home, solar-powered project now being completed will house Office of Justice Services (OJS) employees at the Ute Mountain Ute Agency in Colorado.

Similar to OFMC's two-home project for OJS in the Hopi village of Moencopi, Ariz., just outside of Tuba City, the houses have rooftop solar electricity-generating panels designed to supply one-third or more of each unit's expected electrical energy needs.

OFMC's three-home OJS quarters project at the Lower Brule Agency in South Dakota will utilize ground source heat pumps to save heating and cooling costs.

The units are equipped with energy-efficient doors and windows and with insulation suitable for weather conditions found among Indian Country locations in the Northern Tier. Extended-life metal roofs and exterior siding were used in the construction.

According to Ute Mountain Agency Facility Manager Keith Yessilth, the housing units are constructed to meet and exceed energy and maintenance-free requirements. Some estimates show there will be more than sufficient power generated by the solar panels and that excess power will be fed back into the local community electrical grid operated by Empire Electric of Cortez, Colo.



Workers complete the solar panel installation on a home at the Ute Mountain Ute Agency.



Extra equipment mounted on the exterior of each home converts the energy captured by the solar collectors into electricity and, in some cases, back into the power grid.

[Video: Tour the energy improvements at the Ute Mountain Ute detention center.](#)